

H. Kaplan (2)

February 18, 1965

Dear Henry:

The last two weeks have seen a number of unfortunate confrontations, but for a while I had the feeling that painful as they were, they might lead to a new context in which we might conduct our affairs in the future. If so, the labor pains might be entirely worth while.

I count on your having seen the minutes of the formal actions, but there are bound to be many points of detail and attitude missing from them, but necessary to any outlook. I hope you will hear more about these before you make any fixed judgments.

I must say that when I first heard of Hoppy's letter, I wondered what all the fuss was about. But as its potential consequences became clearer, and the more I thought about it, I realized what a bad judgment it was to take it so casually. In many ways this is exactly the issue of principle now at stake. The Search Committee did assume without question that a letter of this significance would not have been sent without close consultation in the Department of Radiology. Nothing in the letter said the contrary (just as a reference to its being purportedly a 'personal' letter did not preclude your having seen it.) We were later told, and accepted, that we had been wrong in this assumption, in fact that you had discouraged sending it. And it is easy to see how, in the rush of preparing for your trip, you may not have wanted to spend much time trying to anticipate what its consequences might be. I also recognize you had personally stated your position on the MSP problem very clearly and would have preferred not to have to be involved with it any further.

H. KAPLAN

When the Radiology Department had also forwarded their statement supporting the implementation of a majority decision I was very pleased that this constructive response could take the place of the negative tone of our draft resolution. So I was glad to take the lead in moving the withdrawal of sections 2 and 3 of our draft motion. This meant just that: no formal notice would be taken of the letter or its propriety. I felt the underlying issues would continue to be discussed, and it was better to dissociate them from any personal involvements, especially off one of our most valued colleagues. And I told Herb just that, as also that I thought he had given us a demonstration of some of the most statesmanlike debate in the history of the executive committee. At this point, however, I just do not agree with Herb that free speech is an issue in this matter. (We are doubtless going to take this up again at executive committee tomorrow and I keep my fingers crossed that we come out of it in better temper). If we are going to function as an executive committee leading a responsible faculty, we have the same responsibility to one another as the members of a cabinet--to keep one another thoroughly informed in our external dealings and to establish and abide by clearcut procedures for resolving the deciding questions even when (as must often happen) we cannot be unanimous about them. I know you subscribe to this, and you have done so. In the present circumstances, Herb should share this responsibility both as a senior faculty member and as your alternate on

the executive committee. And I am sure that when the atmosphere of personal recriminations or threat of them or fancied threat of them (whichever they are) has cleared away, that Herb will also. I do not expect full and instant agreement about the application of this principle, and there are enough distractions in the present case that it would (and did) not evoke a reflex response on my part except for the grave threat of serious damage to the school in its search for a dean and in its relationships with the President and the Board. I just don't want to press ~~my~~ judgment on an individual example whose gravity was largely an unlucky accident of timing. I am more content that the principles of mutual responsibility have been aired so that some thought will have to be given to them. Their essentiality for self-government is so plain that I think good judgment will be far more effective as the route to their application than any possible formal proceedings.

In any case, please do contact me on your return, and I hope in time that what you hear from me may help in forming your own position. You and Herb and the Department call on my deepest affection and respect and I just want to see us move ahead now.

P.S. After writing this letter, I have shown it to Dave Hamburg ( knowing that he holds essentially the same views) and no one else.